



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH  
1102 SE Quince Street • PO Box 47990  
Olympia, Washington 98504-7990

May 14, 2003

**To:** State Board of Health Members  
**From:** Don Sloma, Executive Director  
**Re:** COMMUNITY FORUMS ON HEALTH ISSUES

**Background and Summary**

The Board's priority area interest in access to critical health services and its statutory duty to serve as a public forum on health issues have led to interest in fostering dialogues of all kinds about health and medical issues.

Over the course of the last year, two private organizations have developed and are presently implementing plans to engage in dozens of small, community discussions to gauge public values, attitudes and preferences about the substance, organization, delivery and financing of medical care. They are the Washington Health Foundation (WHF) and Humanlinks. Rather than duplicate these efforts, the state Board of Health, the Office of Insurance Commissioner, other state agencies and some in the Legislature have chosen to support these efforts and monitor their results for possible use in developing state health policy.

The Board's FYI section has been listing the date and location of the WHF Community Conversations for several months, many local health jurisdictions are serving as community sponsors for the sessions, and the Washington State Public Health Association (WSPHA) is one of a dozen statewide sponsors of the effort.

According to its statutory duty to develop a biennial state health report (RCW 43.20.050), the Board is required to hold community forums. One such community forum is the series of meetings Board members and staff members are currently holding with local boards of health. The possibility exists that others might be the Washington Health Foundation Community Roundtables and/or the Humanlinks Community Conversations. We have representatives of both organizations with us today to learn about their processes and findings to date.

- James Whitfield, Washington Health Foundation is here to discuss that organization's Community Roundtables process. For more information on the process please refer to [www.whf.org/pro\\_assuring\\_transform.html](http://www.whf.org/pro_assuring_transform.html). A recent progress report is attached.
- Julie Davidson, Humanlinks Foundation is here to discuss that organization's Community Conversations process. For more information on the process, please refer to <http://www.humanlinksfoundation.org>. Click on "Health," then click on "Implement."

**Recommended Board Action:**

*The Board directs staff to review the results of the Washington Health Foundation and Humanlinks Community Forum processes when they are complete and recognizing any methodological limitations they may contain, to incorporate relevant portions of them as one expression of citizen input in the 2004 state health report, the 2003 annual report and in any other Board reports it may publish in the coming year that may call for citizen views.*